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Meeting the Basic Needs of **FIRST-YEAR 4-H CLUB MEMBERS**



EXTENSION SERVICE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

August 1952
PA 203

A Cooperative Publication

This booklet has been developed as a result of the findings reached in the third phase of the Western Region Study of First-Year 4-H Members. The regional study is under the supervision of a committee composed of the following members:

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Meeting the Basic Needs of FIRST-YEAR 4-H CLUB MEMBERS

By

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DURING 1950 and 1951, extension agents in 121 counties in 11 Western States studied 205 boys and girls. These young people were chosen at random from the youth in the counties concerned who had been in 4-H Club work for 1 year but had not reenrolled for a second year. Case reports written for each of these boys and girls

revealed very different local situations, but most of these reports seemed to have one thing in common. This was, that the situations in which a large percentage of these first-year 4-H Club members found themselves did not satisfy some of their basic developmental needs. In nearly every case, it seemed natural for the boy, or girl, to reject 4-H Club work for himself and to turn to some other situation that might be either more satisfying or less unsatisfying.

To what degree these apparently unsatisfying situations also exist among reenrolled members, but have been counterbalanced by some other attraction or satisfaction, the committee supervising the study does not know. However, since these case reports indicate rather reliably that they do exist among many nonreenrolled members, and they probably also exist to some degree among reenrolled members, the committee felt that more thought and attention should be given to the following aspects of working with boys and girls.

Each first-year 4-H Club member needs to have, among others, those experiences in his 4-H Club work that will contribute to the satisfaction of his—

Need for a sense of personal worth:

Desire for attention.

Desire for prestige.

Desire to excel.

Need for a continuing sense of personal security.

Desire for a feeling of accomplishment.

Although every child has many developmental and social-adjustment needs, only the ones just mentioned are considered in this booklet. It is set up so that an extension agent or local leader may use it to check his own county or local 4-H program, after reading the information preceding each checklist. It may well be used in discussion meetings.

Local 4-H Club Meetings and Other 4-H Club Activities

In regular local club meetings and other activities, the individual member may have an opportunity to satisfy some of his need for—

Attention.

Prestige.

A continuing sense of personal security.

However, if this is to be effective, several things must happen.

The member needs to attend a large proportion of the club meetings and activities. When he fails to attend, 4-H Club work has lost one of its major opportunities to provide satisfying situations for the member.

Members fail to attend club meetings and other activities for various reasons. Among them are lack of transportation, and lack of knowledge of 4-H Club work or interest in it on the part of their parents.

Even when a member is fairly regular in attendance at meetings or other activities, the basic needs mentioned may be difficult to meet if—

The member's personal friends or boys and girls of his own age do not belong to the same group and attend its meetings.

Or:

The member is not given a position of some importance or prestige by being elected to an office; being appointed to a committee; or given responsibility for some job during the meeting or other activity, or in getting ready for it.

Discussion check list:

Check if "Yes"

1. Is an effort made to find out the reasons for non-attendance at meetings, and to correct them?
a. At other activities or events?
2. When members are first enrolled, is an effort made to enroll groups of friends as well as individuals?
3. When the age range is wide, is an effort made to group members by age rather than by years in club work?
4. Is opportunity provided for every first-year club member to hold an office, be on a committee, or have some other individual responsibility?
5. Is a special effort made to see that every first-year club member has a group responsibility?
6. Are all first-year members given an opportunity and encouraged to participate actively in meetings? ..
a. In other activities or events?
7. Is the club meeting so varied that many interests have a chance of being met? ..
a. Is the activity program varied enough?



Discussion check list—continued:

Check if "Yes"

8. Is provision made for transportation for those who do not have it? _____
9. Are new members given prestige when they first enroll through means such as an initiation ceremony and other recognition? _____
10. Are local leaders given adequate training in—
Democratic leadership? _____
Group work techniques? _____
Recreation? _____
Developmental needs of children? _____

Age of 4-H Club Members

Although the needs discussed in this booklet are basic to all youth, their relative importance varies as the boy or girl progresses from being a 10- or 11-year-old to being a young adult of 20 years of age. In addition, other needs become important as the youth develops.

Data in recent studies have shown that a boy or girl who enters 4-H Club work at 10 or 11 years of age is more likely to stay with the work than one who enrolls at a later age. This may be because 4-H Club work as set up for first-year members probably is more satisfying to a 10- or 11-year-old than to an older boy or girl.

Discussion check list:

Check if "Yes"

1. Are all 10-year-olds invited each year to join a 4-H Club? _____
2. Is special effort made each year to inform the boys and girls who will be potential members in the year ahead and to arouse their interest? _____
3. Is a special effort made to adjust subject-matter project work to the maturity of the members? _____
4. Is a special effort made to provide older first-year members with greater responsibility? _____

Subject-Matter Project Work



Through subject-matter project work, such as gardening and clothing, the boy, or girl, starting in 4-H Club work can get some satisfaction of his desire for—

- A feeling of accomplishment.
- Attention.
- Prestige.
- Excelling.

However, he can get little satisfaction from his project if he does not work at it actively, reach a set goal, and let others know about it.

This requires that the member carry a project in which he is interested, and that he receive the help he needs in completing it.

A project that is not completed hinders the member in receiving the attention and the feeling of accomplishment he needs.

Discussion check list:

Check if "Yes"

1. Is adequate subject-matter training given to—
Adult local leaders?
Junior leaders?
2. Is careful consideration given to which projects, and how many, can be adequately handled in the club?
3. Are parents informed, preferably in person, of the 4-H member's project needs and requirements?
4. Are local leaders trained to analyze each member's situation, and to provide adequate project help for those not being helped enough at home?
5. Is the variety of projects offered wide enough to fit the interests and home facilities of members?
6. Are first-year members given help in selecting projects best suited to home facilities and situations?

Discussion check list—continued:

Check if "Yes"

7. Is a special effort made to see that each member has needed supplies and equipment?
8. Is a special effort made to see that each member thoroughly understands the subject matter necessary for satisfactory completion of his project?

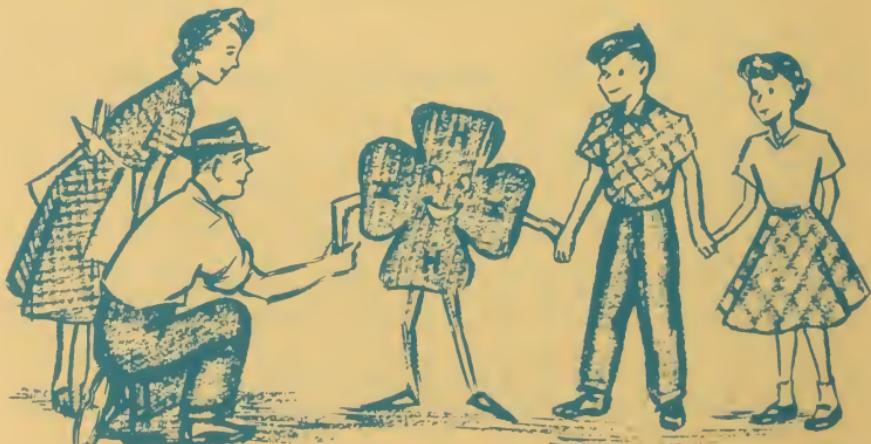
Parent Cooperation

Cooperation of the parents of 4-H Club members helps 4-H Club work to provide the necessary opportunities for meeting the basic needs of the boys and girls.

Parent interest and advice not only make it easier for members to complete their project work, but also encourage members in all the ways in which they participate in club meetings and other activities.

Family interest in their activities and approval of their accomplishments give 4-H members the feeling of prestige they need, and also the feeling of personal security that should help to carry them forward with greater confidence into out-of-home activities.

Some parents are unable to provide the transportation necessary to permit their boys and girls to attend all meetings and other events. However, those who can provide it are more likely to do so when they are informed about 4-H Club work and are interested in it. Provision of transportation enables the member to have the chance to participate, compete, and be recognized for his accomplishments.



Discussion check list:

Check if "Yes"

Do agents or local leaders plan—

1. An adequate information system for parents of all first-year 4-H Club members? _____
2. Inclusion of parents of 4-H members in as many 4-H events as possible? _____
3. Especially for those whose parents cannot, or prefer not to, give support:
 - a. Personal and at-home help on project work for all members—by junior leaders, adult local leaders, and county agents? _____
 - b. Arrangements by local persons for transportation of those who do not have it? _____
 - c. Arrangements for financial help for members who need it to start a project? _____

Recognition and Competition

Through recognition and competition, several basic needs, such as the following, might well be partially satisfied: A desire—

For attention.

For prestige.

To excel.

For a feeling of accomplishment.

However, first-year 4-H Club members do not always have so much chance to satisfy these desires as more experienced club members do, although their basic needs are just as great.

Possibly these needs can be met through competition. If the competitive activity turns out to be satisfactory, the member may have all the four needs listed met to some degree. If he feels that he has failed in competition, all these needs are not met and many boys and girls will eventually turn to other activity, in which there seems to be a better chance of having them met. We should recognize that the desire to excel is not satisfied in competition merely through competing.

Recognition need not be limited to project work; nor need attention, prestige, accomplishment, or even excelling be

attained only through competition. Recognition for individual talent, industry, enthusiasm, and leadership can provide needed satisfactions.

If recognition through competition in the project field is the major opportunity provided to enable a member to meet various basic needs, it is important that he be given help in completing his project so that he can compete, and that he compete in classes in which he has a chance to win.

Discussion check list:

Check if "Yes"

1. Is opportunity provided for every member to exhibit? _____
 a. To compete? _____
2. Is opportunity provided for every member to receive recognition of some kind? _____
3. Are provisions made for transportation for all who need it? _____
4. Is opportunity provided for members to exhibit or compete in other than subject-matter project work? _____
5. Is opportunity provided for recognition of other than subject-matter project work, exhibiting, or competition? _____
6. Is emphasis placed on improving member's own record? _____
7. Is assistance given individuals to evaluate their own progress? _____
8. Is personal recognition given for progress, regardless of the starting point? _____

REFERENCES

- A healthy personality for every child: A digest of the fact-finding report to The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth. 197 pp. Raleigh, N.C., Health Publications Institute. 1951.
- Herbert Sorenson and Marguerite Malm. Psychology for living. 637 pp. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. 1948.
- A. R. Mangus. Personality adjustment of school children. 19 pp. Columbus, Ohio State University. 1948.
- Herbert H. Helble. Extra-class activities satisfy four fundamental needs of young people. NEA Journal. pp. 75 to 77. February 1952.

Do

Consider each first-year member as an individual of personal worth to the club and to the community.

Do

Make each first-year member feel important—

When he first joins.

During the club year.

At the end of the year.

Do

Make a special effort to visit club members' parents who show little interest in 4-H Club work.

Do

See that every first-year club member has something special to do in connection with club affairs.

Do

Make certain that each first-year member has the necessary information and supplies to complete his project.

Do

Work out several methods other than exhibits and competitive affairs that may give recognition to members unable to participate in such affairs.

Do

Have the club take part in some community activity that attracts favorable notice and gives prestige.



*Each member needs to be noticed, to be
important, to win, and to be praised.*

—Helble

